

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1 - 10 (Canceled).

11. (Currently amended) A dishwasher, comprising:
a container for retaining ~~therein~~ items to be subjected to a dishwashing operation;
and

a controller for ~~at least~~ one of controlling an operating function effecting a switching on of the dishwasher, controlling an operating function effecting a switching off of the dishwasher, and selecting operational functions of the dishwasher, the controller including ~~a~~ ~~at least one~~ touch-sensitive surface with switching functions allocated to ~~an~~ ~~at least one~~ operating function, wherein the switching function of the touch-sensitive surface is actuatable by relatively light touching contact and the relevant operating function is thereby respectively switched off, switched on, or selected.

12 (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the ~~at least one~~ touch-sensitive surface of the controller reacts to a change in an electromagnetic field ~~by a selected one of~~ ~~capacitively reacting by means of a capacitor, reacting by means of an infrared light curtain, reacting by means of a piezo element, and reacting in another manner, whereby the relevant operating function is then switched on or off or selected.~~

13. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the controller includes ~~a number of~~ touch-sensitive surfaces with switching functions, each being allocated ~~an~~ ~~at least one~~ operating function.

14. (Previously Presented) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller has a flat surface that is disposed substantially in the

same plane as the surface in which the controller is located on the dishwasher in a selected one of flush disposition of an end of the flat surface with the surface in which the controller is located on the dishwasher and a non-flush disposition of an end of the flat surface with the surface in which the controller is located on the dishwasher.

15. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the viewing surface of the controller is made at least partly of a transparent material, ~~preferably matt-finished material~~.

16. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller is covered at least partly by a transparent film ~~preferably of plastic~~.

17. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller is covered at least in part by a flexible metal film ~~that preferably has lettering to identify the operating function of the touch-sensitive surface located thereunder~~.

18. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller is controllably illuminated by a lamp one or more lamps ~~preferably in steps~~.

19. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller is only illuminated by a lamp one or more lamps when the operating function allocated to the touch-sensitive surface is selected or switched on.

20. (Currently amended) The dishwasher according to claim 11, wherein the touch-sensitive surface of the controller is back-illuminated by a plurality number of lamps ~~preferably a number of light emitting diodes of different light color~~.

21. (New) The dishwasher of claim 15, wherein the surface of the controller comprises a matt-finished material.
22. (New) The dishwasher of claim 16, wherein the transparent film comprises a plastic.
23. (New) The dishwasher of claim 17, wherein the flexible metal film comprises lettering that identifies an operating function of the touch-sensitive surface.
24. (New) The dishwasher of claim 18, wherein the touch-sensitive surface is controllably illuminated in steps.
25. (New) The dishwasher of claim 20, wherein the plurality of lamps comprises a plurality of differently-colored light-emitting diodes.
26. (New) A dishwasher comprising:
 - a controller that controls the operation of the dishwasher; and
 - a touch-sensitive user interface in communication with the controller that is responsive to a change in an electromagnetic field.
27. (New) The dishwasher of claim 26, wherein the user-interface is controllably illuminated in steps.